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For immediate release

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RTA Board OKs city recommendation to widen Broadway to six lanes

The Regional Transportation Authority Board today approved \$1.5 million in funding for the City of Tucson to proceed with the roadway corridor design to widen Broadway Boulevard, from Euclid Avenue to Country Club Road, from four travel lanes to six lanes, with bus pullouts, bike lanes and sidewalks.

Under the RTA plan, the Broadway Boulevard project was initially planned to widen the roadway to a 6-lane arterial, plus 2 dedicated bus lanes, bike lanes and sidewalks.

"The City of Tucson, working with the RTA, formed the Broadway Citizens Task Force following the RTA Administrative Code and has been engaged over the last 29 months to create a balanced, livable and multimodal corridor recommendation while maintaining the functionality of the improvements as adopted in the RTA plan, according to Tucson Mayor and RTA Board Member Jonathan Rothschild.

Results of professional analysis of technical data support that a 6-lane cross section will meet the capacity, safety and mobility intent approved in the RTA plan. In a recent detailed modeling analysis, the City's project team concluded that the 6-lane option would not diminish project functionality.

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The RTA Technical Management Committee considered the “functionality” of the recommended cross-section and voted unanimously to endorse the finding that the proposed 6-lane roadway will not diminish functionality from the scope of the RTA plan.

In a review of the RTA statute (portions of A.R.S. 48-5304, 48-5309 and 48-5314), Thomas Benavidez of the Benavidez Law Group provided a legal opinion that the city’s proposed implementation of the project as recommended by the project Citizens’ Task Force and the RTA’s Technical Management Committee “1) would not constitute a substantial change of the RTA’s 20-year regional transportation plan; 2) would not diminish project functionality; and 3) it would be consistent with the RTA’s fiduciary duty to the public to spend RTA funds in the most economical and feasible manner possible.”

The Board considered the 6-lane recommendation from the project’s Citizen Task Force to the Tucson City Council, which approved the recommendation on Oct. 9. The citizens group, which included representatives from businesses, area neighborhoods and the region, made the recommendation following an extensive public participation process that included 34 committee meetings and four public open houses.

The RTA plan allocates \$42,120,000 to the Broadway project. Another \$29,222,000 in regional funds, including \$25 million from 1997 Pima County Transportation Bonds, are programmed for the project.

The estimated cost to complete the design and final alignment of the corridor, including right-of-way research/estimating, is \$2.5 million. The City of Tucson is providing the additional \$1 million.

The Regional Transportation Authority is the fiscal manager of the \$2.1 billion regional transportation plan approved by Pima County voters on May 16, 2006. The RTA Board is comprised of elected representatives from the cities of Tucson and South Tucson, Pima County, the towns of Marana, Oro Valley and Sahuarita, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe and the Tohono O’odham Nation. A representative of the Arizona State Transportation Board also serves on the board. For more information about the RTA plan, visit www.RTAmobility.com, see RTA Pima County on Facebook, or call (520) 770-9410.